

REMARKS

This responds to the Office Action mailed on August 24, 2005, and the references cited therewith.

Claims 1, 3-7, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21 and 23-26 are amended, claims 13-16 and 22 are canceled, and no new claims are added; as a result, claims 1-12, 17-21 and 23-29 are now pending in this application.

Claim Objections

Claims 12 and 23-25 were objected to as being due to informalities. Claims 12 and 23-25 have been amended to address the informalities.

§112 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-6, 10, 16-17, 20, 26 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as lacking adequate description or enablement. Applicant respectfully submits that one skilled in the art would understand the meaning of the term “inverted signal” from the context. For instance, at p. 3, lines 19-21, Applicant states “In one embodiment, controller 22 looks for an inverted version of the signal (in order to prevent someone from simply shorting the input of the emitter 16 to the output of sensor 18).” Similar language is used in Stockdale (U.S. 6,575,833) at col. 4, lines 5-11.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-12, 17-21 and 23-29.

§102 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-11, 13-20 and 25-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) for anticipation by Stockdale (U.S. 6,575,833).

Stockdale describes a access detection mechanism which uses an emitter and sensor to detect access to gaming devices. As the Examiner notes, in one example embodiment, Stockdale’s access detection mechanism drives the emitter with a signal and monitors the sensor to determine if it generated an inverted version of the signal.

In contrast, Applicant describes a system and method for retrofitting an existing access detection mechanism with new access detection mechanism in order to have two detection mechanism working in parallel. Claims 1, 3-7, 12, 17, 18, 20, and 23-26 have been amended to clarify this distinction. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-12, 17-21 and 23-29.

§103 Rejection of the Claims

Claims 2, 6, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockdale in view of Stillwagon (U.S. 6,496,101).

Claims 2 and 6 are dependent on claim 1 and allowable for the reasons given for claim 1 above. Claims 12 is dependent on claim 7 and allowable for the reasons given for claim 7 above.

In addition, Stillwagon describes an electro-mechanical latching apparatus for an enclosure such as a vending machine. Stillwagon uses a relay to trigger the latching apparatus so as to allow a door to open. This is a different teaching than that of Applicant. Applicant teaches, and claims in claims 6 and 12, using a relay as part of the tamper detection mechanism. Some example embodiments are shown in Figs. 5 and 6. Stillwagon does not teach or suggest using the relay as part of the tamper detection mechanism.

Claims 21 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockdale in view of Slomowitz et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2004/0207524). Claim 22 has been canceled.

Claim 21 is dependent on claim 20 and allowable for the reasons given for claim 20 above.

In addition, although Slomowitz et al describes using a visual indicator to indicate when a displaceable gate is opened, Applicant uses the LED to indicate when the circuit is operating correctly. (See Specification, p. 4, lines 3-7). Claim 21 has been amended to clarify this distinction.

Claims 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stockdale in view of Carmichael (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0100659). Claims 23 and 24 are dependent on claim 20 and allowable for the reasons given for claim 20 above.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6909 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully submitted,

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By their Representatives,

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CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 24th day of February, 2006.

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